

Financial Management Division



Travel Tidbits

“ONE APHIS - - SHARING INFORMATION”

June 2004

This is the first issuance of “Travel Tidbits” for 2004. Travel Tidbits are designed to provide Agency personnel with the current policies and procedures relating to Federal travel and transportation practices. Travel Tidbits will be emailed to program travel contacts on a monthly basis and they are also available online at www.aphis.usda.gov/mrpbs/travel.html.

The information provided is obtained from General Services Administration’s (GSA) Board of Contract Appeals Decisions, Comptroller General (CG) Decisions, Departmental and Agency policy, and, the Federal Travel Regulations (FTR). This publication is to be used as a tool to assist with the interpretation of travel regulations and to provide instructions of travel processes.

Policy for Obtaining Cash Advances for Official Travel

The travel card may be used to obtain a cash advance for meals and incidental expenses for the temporary duty location. A cash advance may also be obtained for miscellaneous expenses such as laundry/dry cleaning, parking, taxi, and tips. Due to limited use, cash advances should not exceed \$50 per day. Cash Advances will be obtained through Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) and employees will be reimbursed for service fees they incur.

Advance of Funds for Non Card Holders and Cancelled Card Holders

Employees who have **not** been issued a travel card and have been requested to travel may request an advance of funds for lodging, meals and incidental expenses and miscellaneous expenses on an APHIS Form 62-R, “Travel Advance Request for Employees Without A Government Travel Credit Card.” Bill common carrier transportation to the Agency central account.

Employees who have been issued a card but then the Agency cancelled their card due to delinquency or misuse, and who need to perform official travel must bill their common carrier transportation to their Agency’s central account. All other travel- related costs are required to be paid by the employee using a personal charge card or with personal funds.

A cancelled travel card account reflects unfavorable past performance. For this reason, employees with cancelled travel card accounts are considered high- risk in the repayment of travel advances. In the cases of extreme hardship, employees who have lost their charge card privileges may request approval of a travel advance on a trip-by-trip basis using the attached APHIS Form 62-R. This form is the only acceptable method by which a cancelled card holder may submit a travel advance request. It must be approved prior to travel. Cases of extreme hardship are rare. In certain travel situations when travel is considered vital, cases of extreme hardship will be considered. For example:

- a. Mission critical travel that cannot be performed by another APHIS employee and concurred with by the Program Deputy Administrator.
- b. Emergency outbreak travel when specific services are required.
- c. Money/account to repay the travel card expenses is legally tied up.

If an advance of funds is approved, the amount will be limited to the hotel and M&IE portions of the trip. Employees must prepare and submit a travel voucher, together with any required receipts, within 5 working days upon the completion of travel or every 30 days if they are in continuous travel status. The entire amount of the advance of funds must be designated to be deducted from the amount which is due to be reimbursed on the travel voucher and a personal check submitted for any outstanding advance amounts which exceed the amount due to be reimbursed. Send the check and a copy of the travel voucher to :

USDA Administrative Collections
P. O. Box 70792
Chicago, IL 60673

If an employee fails to repay the entire advance amount when he/she prepares the travel voucher (s) for reimbursement of his/her travel expenses, the Agency will deny all future requests for an advance of funds.

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